sake, do not tell anybody or write in the newspapers about what happened among us. Otherwise we shall all be lost. Respectfully yours, Safronov, Lissevich."

EIGHT HOURS A DAY!

The October strike was followed in St. Petersburg by the outbreak of a spontaneous campaign for the eight-hour working day. Without presenting a formal demand for a shorter workday, workers in some factories voted to work only eight hours instead of the customary ten. The men would report as usual in the morning, recess at noon, resume work with the factory whistle, and, after working eight hours in all, lay down the tools and leave the plant. This arrangement was described as a revolutionary introduction of the eight-hour working day. Technically, however, each working day ended in a walkout. The management countered this move by paying piece workers at the old rates and crediting time workers with four-fifths of their daily wage.

Thus the workers faced the choice of taking a twenty per cent cut in earnings or fighting for higher wage rates. At the factory meetings they asked the party speakers for advice. The only advice we could give was to refer the question to the Soviet. The latter, however, was not ready to handle the situation. A strike committee, elected by factory meetings and itself imbued with the spirit of these meetings, it could not explain to the workers that a temporary suspension of the political strike did not offer a proper opportunity to launch an economic offensive. At the beginning, many delegates in the Soviet doubted whether hours of work could be reduced by the one-sided decision of a factory meeting, but they soon fell under the spell of the general revolutionary psychology.

When the Soviet met on October 29, its agenda did not include the length of the work day. The meeting was called because of rumors that General Trepov was cooking up another pogrom. As usual, the meeting opened with reports. One after another, delegates reported on their progress in reducing hours of work. Some plants were lagging but complete victory was near! In this mood, the Soviet voted a resolution praising factories that had cut their work hours and ordering all workers in the capital to join the movement and to ask for higher wage rates.

There were no dissenting votes, but after the chairman had announced the unanimous decision, a distressed voice spoke from the rear of the hall. "What have we done, comrades? The struggle with Tsarism is not yet won, and we are starting the fight against capital-